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BOX PATENT
APPLICATION

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Attorney Docket No.: LAMA116222

TRANSMITTAL LETTER

Seattle, Washington 98101

October 4, 2000

jc836 U.S. PTO
09/677495
10/04/00

TO THE COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS:

Transmitted herewith for filing under 37 C.F.R. § 1.53(b) by Express Mail is the complete patent application of: Gregory Lorne Pollon and Timothy Dale Stewart, entitled APPARATUS FOR SUPPORTING SPORT PRACTICE TARGETS, executed on August 26, 2000.

- X 1. An application consisting of 11 pages of specification and claims and 6 sheets of formal drawings is attached.
- X 2. A newly executed Declaration for Patent Application is attached.
- X 3. An Assignment of the invention to 843001 Alberta Ltd. is attached. A Cover Sheet prepared in accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 3.31 is attached to the Assignment. Please record this Assignment in accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 3.11.
- X 4. A filing date in accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.10 is requested. The Express Mail Certificate appears below.
- X 5. Priority of Application No. 2,285,795, filed on October 13, 1999, in Canada is claimed under 35 U.S.C. § 119. Certified copies of the priority documents will be filed at a later date.
- X 6. The following additional documents are enclosed: Information Disclosure Statement, Information Cited by Applicants That May be Material to the Prosecution of the Subject Application, Six (6) Cited References.
- X 7. Small entity status is asserted for this matter..

COMPUTATION OF FEE

	Number Filed	Number Extra	Rate	Basic Fee 355.00
Total Claims	12 - 20	= 0	x 9.00	= 0.00

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Independent Claims	2 - 3	=	0	x	40.00	=	0.00
Multiple Dependent Claims	-0-		---		135.00		

TOTAL						355.00
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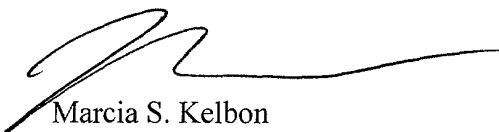
- X 8. Our Check No. 121180 in the amount of \$395.00 to cover the total fee as computed above and the fee for recordation of assignment is enclosed.
- X 9. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16, 1.17 and 1.18 which may be required during the entire pendency of the application, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 03-1740. This authorization also hereby includes a request for any extensions of time of the appropriate length required upon the filing of any reply during the entire prosecution of this application. A copy of this sheet is enclosed.

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Respectfully submitted,

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EXPRESS MAIL CERTIFICATE

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I hereby certify that this paper or fee is being deposited with the United States Postal Service "Express Mail Post Office to Addressee" service under 37 C.F.R. § 1.10 on the date indicated above and is addressed to the Commissioner for Patents, Washington, D.C. 20231.

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TITLE OF THE INVENTION:

Apparatus For Supporting Sport Practice Targets

NAME(S) OF INVENTOR(S):

5 Gregory Lorne Pollon
Timothy Dale Stewart

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

10 The present invention relates to an apparatus for
supporting sport practice targets

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

15 There are a variety of apparatus for supporting sport
practice targets, each of which consist of a sheet of flexible
material which is secured to a support structure. The
following patents are examples of such apparatus: CA 1,140,180,
CA 2,118,256, US 5,277,430, and US 5,876,291. This type of
apparatus can be used with any type of sport that involves
propelling a projectile at a target area, such as baseball,
20 soccer, golf, and hockey. Mounted on the sheet of flexible
material are targets appropriate to the selected sport. CA
2,118,256 is intended for hockey practice and illustrates as
a target a hockey goalie. US 5,876,291 is intended for golf
practice and illustrates a fairway with a distant green serving
25 as the target. There are a variety of support structures that
could be used to support such an apparatus. One commonly
depicted is a garage door opening. The reason for this is that
a garage door opening is available in many homes and is of a
size that will accommodate targets for most sports activities.

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The problem with the sports practice apparatus, as
describe above, is that they are time consuming to mount to the
selected support structure. They, typically, have grommets
that enable them to be tied in place around their peripheral
35 edges with ties. More often than not, a father only has a brief
window of opportunity of twenty or thirty minutes to play
hockey on the driveway with his children or hit a few practice

golf balls. When the window of opportunity for sports practice presents itself, it is not practical if the sports practice apparatus takes ten minutes to mount to the support structure. It is even worse when the support structure is the garage door opening, for the another ten minutes must be spent in taking the sports practice apparatus down so it does not obstruct the garage door opening.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

10 What is required is an apparatus for supporting sport practice targets that can be rapidly positioned on a support structure for use and just as rapidly taken down.

15 According to the present invention there is provided an apparatus for supporting sport practice targets which includes an elongate container having a sidewall defining an interior cavity with an elongate access opening extending through the sidewall to the interior cavity. A roll of flexible sheet material is disposed within the interior cavity of the container. The sheet material displays one or more graphics depicting sport practice targets. The sheet material has an extended position in which sheet material extends through the access opening so that the graphics of sport practice targets are visible and a retracted position in which all but a remote peripheral edge of the roll of sheet material is retracted within the container. A mounting is provided which is adapted for mounting the container to a support structure.

25 With the apparatus, as described above, the sport practice targets may be rapidly deployed by pulling the sheet material to the extended position. The sport practice target may be just as rapidly put away by returning the sheet material to the retracted position. In many families both the father and the mother work. The apparatus for supporting sport practice targets, described above, can easily be deployed by children or their babysitters. The apparatus may be mounted on the support structure, thereby eliminating the need to pull the

apparatus from storage everytime it is to be used. It is preferred that the manner of mounting include a mounting bracket to secure the remote peripheral edge of the roll of sheet material. It is also preferred that the roll of sheet material be biased toward the retracted position, as such biasing will tend to keep the sheet of material taut during use.

Although beneficial results may be obtained through the use of the sport target apparatus, as described above, even more beneficial results may be obtained when a sensor is embedded in the sheet material in the vicinity of each of the graphics depicting a sport practice target. The sensor is connected to a strike indicator adapted to emit either an auditory tone or a visual signal when one of the graphics of a sport practice target is struck by a projectile. This feature gives the person practicing feedback on performance in the form of positive reinforcement.

Although beneficial results may be obtained through the use of the sport target apparatus, as described above, even more beneficial results may be obtained when the sheet material is reversible and graphics depicting practice targets for different sports are displayed on the different sides of the sheet material.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

These and other features of the invention will become more apparent from the following description in which reference is made to the appended drawings, wherein:

FIGURE 1 is an exploded perspective view of an apparatus for supporting a sports practice target constructed in accordance with the teachings of the present invention.

FIGURE 2 is a front elevation view of an apparatus for supporting sports practice targets, with the sheet material in the process of being deployed.

FIGURE 3 is a front elevation view of the apparatus for

supporting sports practice targets shown in **FIGURE 2**, with the sheet material in the fully deployed position.

FIGURE 4 is a top view in section of an elongate container for the apparatus for supporting sports practice targets shown in **FIGURE 2**, with the roll of sheet material disposed therein.

FIGURE 5 is a side view of the elongate container supported by the first mounting bracket for the apparatus for supporting sports practice targets shown in **FIGURE 2**, secured to a support.

FIGURE 6 is a front elevation view, in partial cutaway, of the apparatus for supporting sports practice targets with the sheet material in the fully deployed position as shown in **FIGURE 3**, with the sheet material having embedded therein a sensor connected to a strike indicator adapted to emit one of an auditory tone and a visual signal when a graphic of a sport practice target is struck by a projectile.

FIGURE 7 is a side view of a sensor embedded within the sheet material as shown in **FIGURE 6**.

20 DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

The preferred embodiment, an apparatus for supporting sports practice targets generally identified by reference numeral 10, will now be described with reference to **FIGURES 1** through 7.

25

Referring to **FIGURE 1**, apparatus 10 includes an elongate container 12, a roll of flexible sheet material 14, and a mounting 16. Container 12 has a sidewall 18 defining an interior cavity 20 with an elongate access opening 22 extending through sidewall 18 to interior cavity 20. Referring to **FIGURE 4**, roll of flexible sheet material 14 is disposed within interior cavity 20 of container 12.

Referring to **FIGURES 2** and 3, mounting 16 is adapted for mounting container 12 to a support structure 24. Mounting 16 includes a first mounting bracket 26 adapted to secure container 12 in a vertical orientation to a first vertical

support 28. Referring to **FIGURE 1**, the illustrated embodiment of first mounting bracket 26 has a supporting member 70 and a spring-clip like securing member 72 spaced apart from each other. Referring to **FIGURE 5**, supporting member 70 detachably underlies and supports a first end 74 of container 12. Referring to **FIGURES 2 and 3**, securing member 72 engages a second end 76 of container 12 to maintain container 12 in a position extending substantially vertically above supporting member 70. It will be recognized that alternative types of first mounting bracket 26 can be used. A second mounting bracket 30 is adapted to secure a remote peripheral edge 32 of roll of sheet material 14 to a second vertical support 34, as illustrated in **FIGURE 3**. Referring to **FIGURE 1**, the embodiment of second mounting bracket 30 illustrated has an upper member 80, a central member 82, and a lower member 84 spaced apart from each other. It will be recognized that alternative types of second mounting bracket 30 can be used. Second mounting bracket 30 has a plurality of male securing members 50 that engage a matching plurality of female securing members 52 along remote peripheral edge 32 to secure sheet material 14 in the extended position to second vertical support 34. It will be recognized that, alternatively, second mounting bracket 30 can have plurality of female securing members 52 and male securing members can be mounted along remote peripheral edge 32. For purposes of illustration, in **FIGURES 2, 3 and 6** first vertical support 28 is a first side of a garage door opening and second vertical support 34 is a second side of the garage door opening.

Sheet material 14 is reversibly withdrawn from container 12 by a handle 44 in a direction indicated by arrow 36 as illustrated in **FIGURE 2**, from a fully retracted position in which all but remote peripheral edge 32 of roll of sheet material 14 is retracted within container 12, to a fully extended position in which sheet material 14 extends through access opening 22, as shown in **FIGURE 3**. Sheet material 14 displays graphics 38 showing a sports practice target 58,

exemplified by a hockey goalie as illustrated in **FIGURE 3**. When sheet material 14 is in the extended position, the graphics 38 are visible. Optionally, a sports scene 40 and advertisements 42 may also be displayed on sheet material 14.

5 Optionally, sheet material 14 is reversible, graphics 38 on one of the sides being different from graphics 38 on the other of the sides, thereby readily allowing apparatus 10 to be used for the practice of more than one sport.

10 A biasing spring (not shown) is mounted within container 12, whereby sheet material 14 is biased to the retracted position. Referring to **FIGURE 2**, sheet material 14 is withdrawn from container 12 against the biasing force. Referring to **FIGURE 3**, sheet material 14 is maintained in a
15 taut state by the biasing spring when in the fully extended position. The biasing spring also ensures that sheet material 14 is readily retracted into container 12 when remote edge 32 is released from second mounting bracket 30.

20 Referring to **FIGURE 7**, sensors 54 optionally are embedded in sheet material 14 in the vicinity of target portions 56 of the sport practice target 58 of the graphics 38. Referring to **FIGURE 6**, sensors 54 are connected by an electronic circuit 60 to a strike indicator 62. Strike indicator 62 is adapted to
25 emit one of an auditory tone and a visual signal when one of the target portions 56 is struck by a projectile (not shown). Referring to **FIGURE 7**, the illustrated embodiment of sensor 54 is an electronic sensor comprising a first electrical contact 64 and a second electrical contact 66 connected in electrical
30 circuit 60. When target 56 is struck by a projectile (not shown), first electrical contact 64 is resiliently deformed to contact second electrical contact 66, thereby completing electrical circuit 60. Referring to **FIGURE 6**, an electrical signal is transmitted from sensor 54 to strike indicator 62,
35 and either an auditory tone or visual signal is emitted to indicate a strike. When first electrical contact 64 resiliently moves out of contact with second electrical contact

66, circuit 60 is broken and the signal is no longer emitted.

It will be apparent to one skilled in the art that modifications may be made to the illustrated embodiment without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention as hereinafter defined in the Claims.

THE EMBODIMENTS OF THE INVENTION IN WHICH AN EXCLUSIVE PROPERTY OR PRIVILEGE IS CLAIMED ARE DEFINED AS FOLLOWS:

- 5 1. An apparatus for supporting sport practice targets, comprising:
 - an elongate container having a sidewall defining an interior cavity with an elongate access opening extending through the sidewall to the interior cavity;
 - 10 a roll of flexible sheet material disposed within the interior cavity of the container, the sheet material displaying at least one graphic of a sport practice target, the sheet material having an extended position in which the sheet material extends through the access opening so that the at
 - 15 least one graphic of a sport practice target is visible and a retracted position in which all but a remote peripheral edge of the roll of sheet material is retracted within the container; and
 - a mounting adapted for mounting the container to a support
 - 20 structure.
2. The apparatus as defined in Claim 1, wherein a sensor is embedded in the sheet material in the vicinity of the at least one graphic of a sport practice target, the sensor being
- 25 connected to a strike indicator adapted to emit one of an auditory tone and a visual signal when the at least one graphic of a sport practice target is struck by a projectile.
3. The apparatus as defined in Claim 1, wherein the sheet
- 30 material has a background graphic that depicts a sports scene.
4. The apparatus as defined in Claim 3, wherein the sports scene includes advertisements promoting products or services of third parties.
- 35 5. The apparatus as defined in Claim 1, wherein the mounting includes a first mounting bracket adapted to secure the container in a vertical orientation to a first vertical support

and a second mounting bracket adapted to secure the remote peripheral edge of the roll of sheet material to a second vertical support.

- 5 6. The apparatus as defined in Claim 1, wherein the first vertical support is a first side of a garage door opening and the second vertical support is a second side of the garage door opening.
- 10 7. The apparatus as defined in Claim 1, wherein the sheet material is biased toward the retracted position.
- 15 8. The apparatus as defined in Claim 1, wherein the sheet material has a first side with several graphics of sport practice targets for a first sport and a second side with several graphics graphic of sport practice targets for a second sport.

9. An apparatus for supporting sport practice targets, comprising:

an elongate container having a sidewall defining an interior cavity with an elongate access opening extending through the sidewall to the interior cavity;

a roll of flexible sheet material disposed within the interior cavity of the container, the sheet material displaying a graphic of a sports scene with several sport practice targets, the sheet material having an extended position in which the sheet material extends through the access opening so that the graphic of the sports scene with the several sport practice targets are visible and a retracted position in which all but a remote peripheral edge of the roll of sheet material is retracted within the container, the sheet material beings biased toward the retracted position;

sensors embedded in the sheet material in the vicinity of the sport practice targets, the sensors being connected to a strike indicator adapted to emit one of an auditory tone and a visual signal when any one of the sport practice targets is struck by a projectile; and

a mounting adapted for mounting the container to a support structure, the mounting including a first mounting bracket adapted to secure the container in a vertical orientation to a first vertical support and a second mounting bracket adapted to secure the remote peripheral edge of the roll of sheet material to a second vertical support.

10. The apparatus as defined in Claim 9, wherein the sports scene includes advertisements promoting products or services of third parties.

11. The apparatus as defined in Claim 9, wherein the first vertical support is a first side of a garage door opening and the second vertical support is a second side of the garage door opening.

12. The apparatus as defined in Claim 9, wherein the sheet
material has a first side with a graphic depicting a first
sport with several sport practice targets appropriate for the
first sport and a second side with a graphic depicting a second
5 sport with several sport practice targets appropriate for the
second sport.

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

An apparatus for supporting sport practice targets includes an elongate container having a sidewall defining an interior cavity with an elongate access opening extending through the sidewall to the interior cavity. A roll of flexible sheet material is disposed within the interior cavity of the container. The sheet material displays one or more graphics depicting sport practice targets. The sheet material has an extended position in which the sheet material extends through the access opening so that the graphics of sport practice targets are visible and a retracted position in which all but a remote peripheral edge of the roll of sheet material is retracted within the container. The sheet of material can be rapidly moved to the extended position for use and just as rapidly moved to the retracted position for storage.

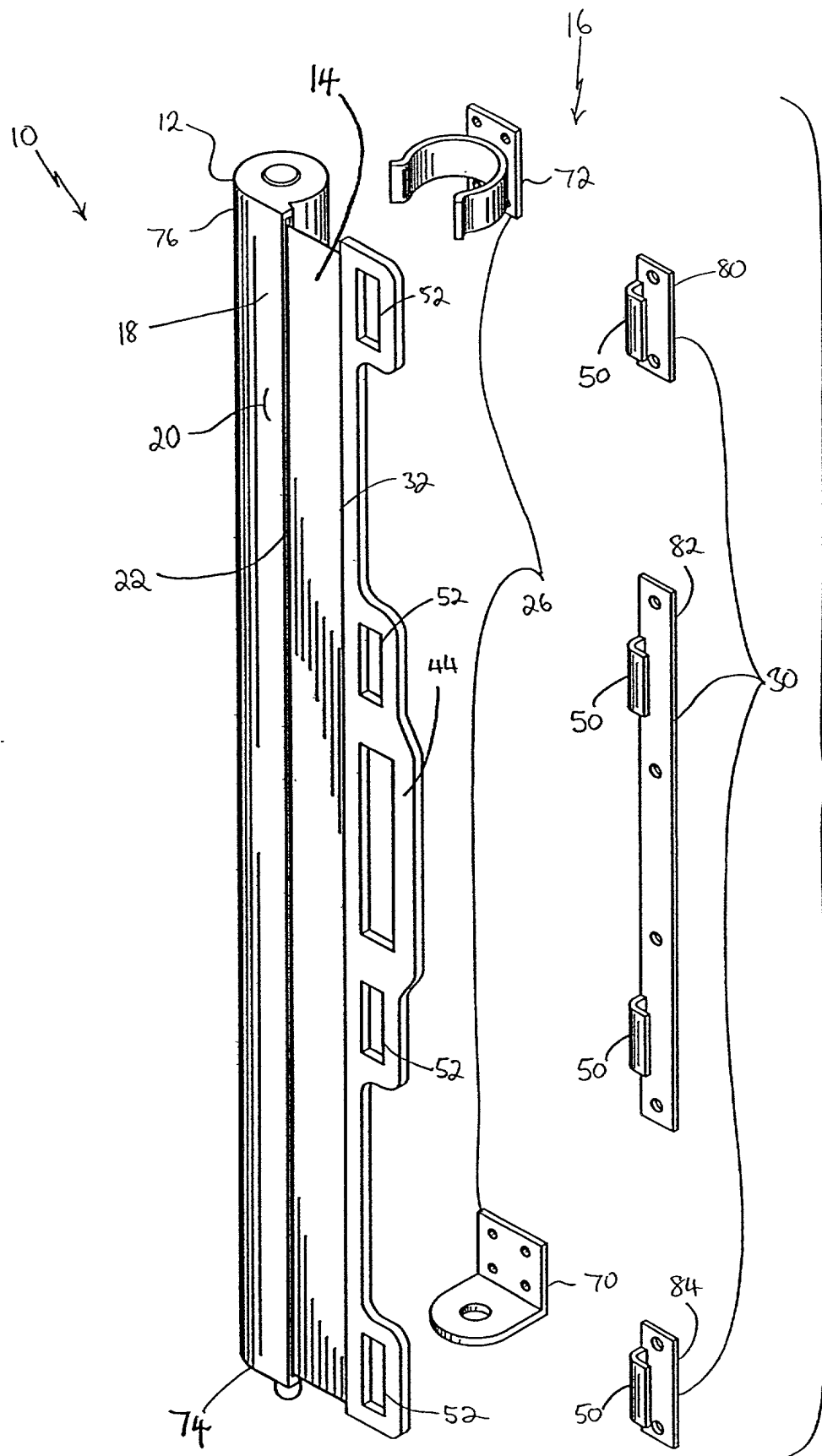
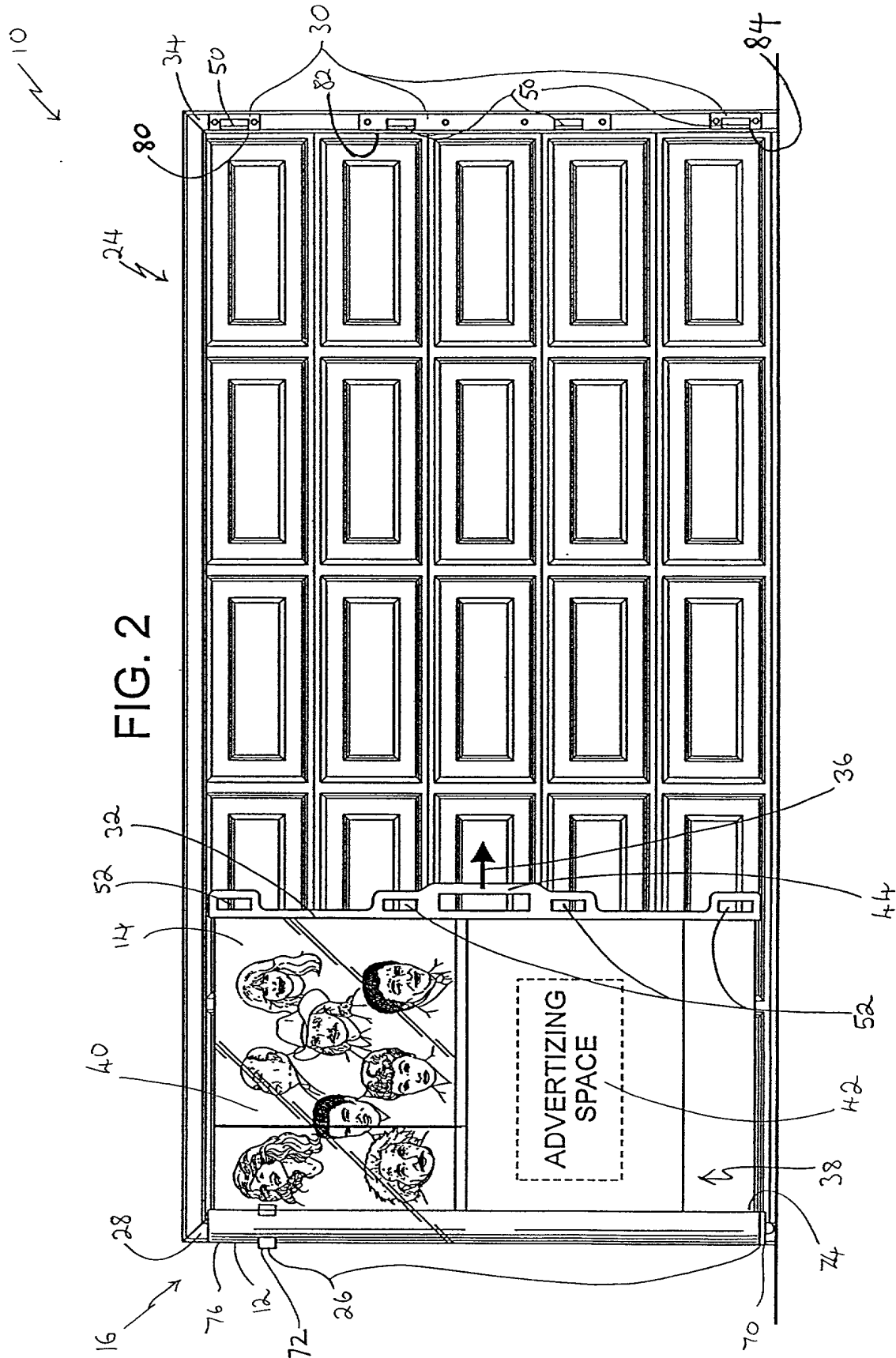
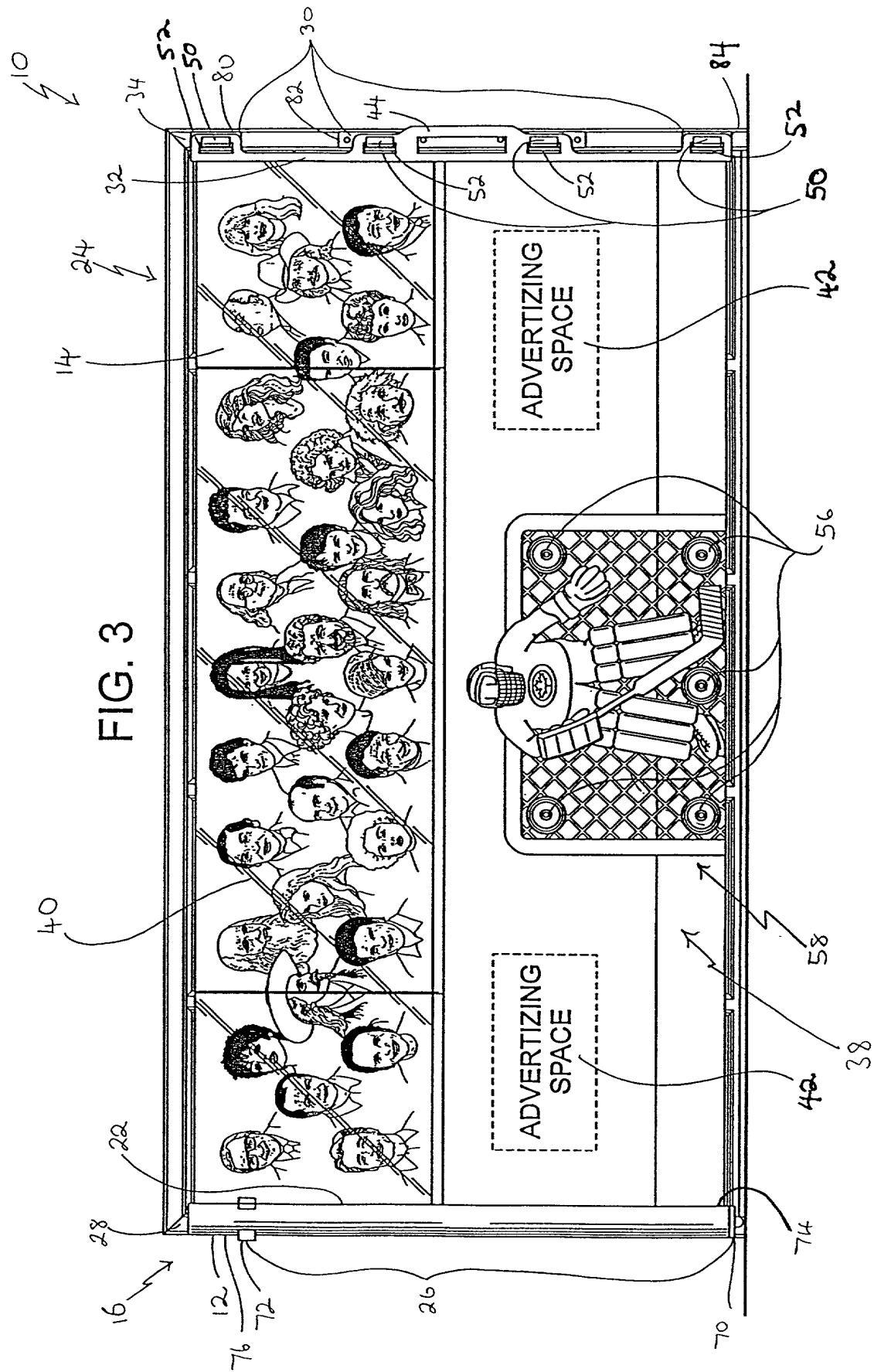


FIG. 1





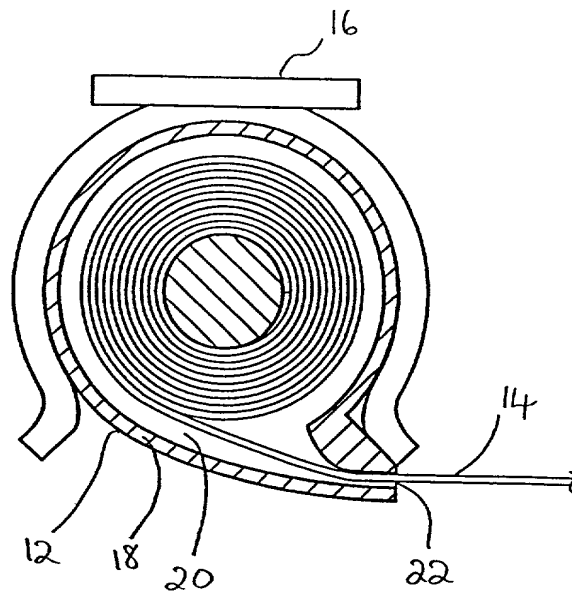
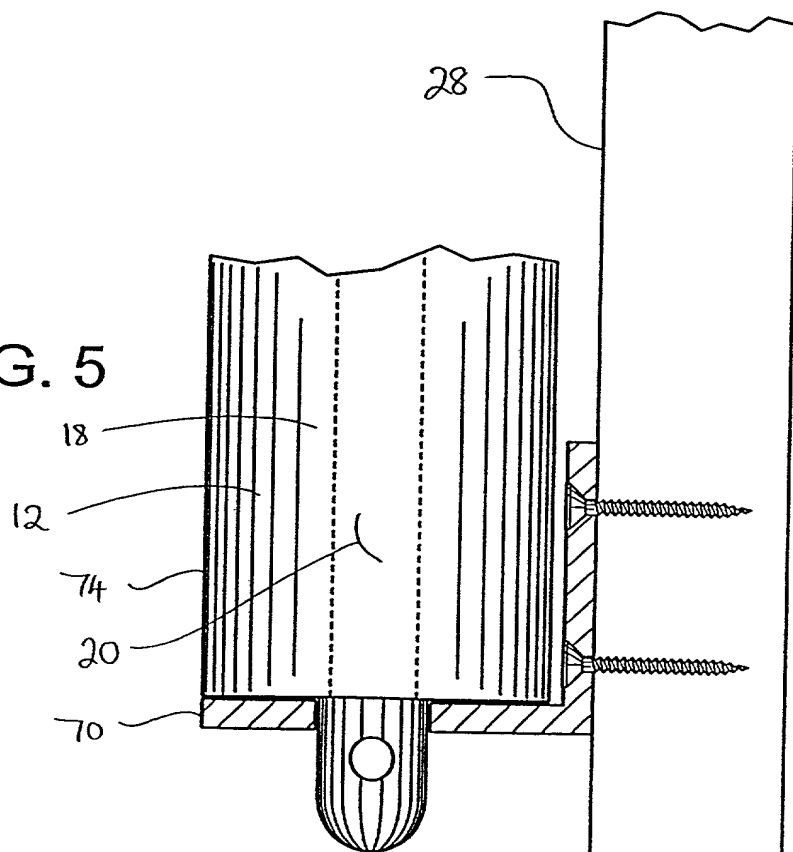
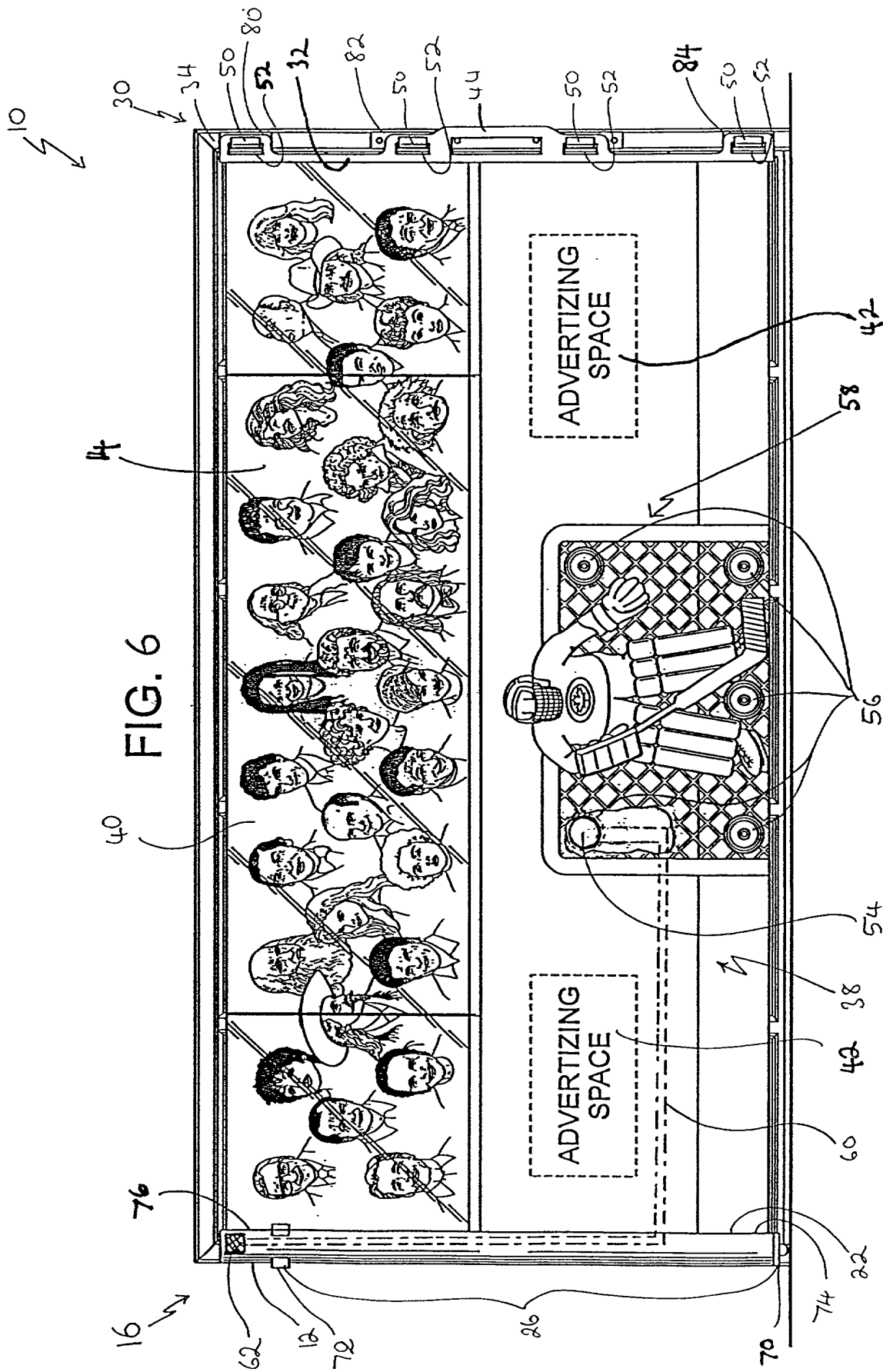


FIG. 4

FIG. 5





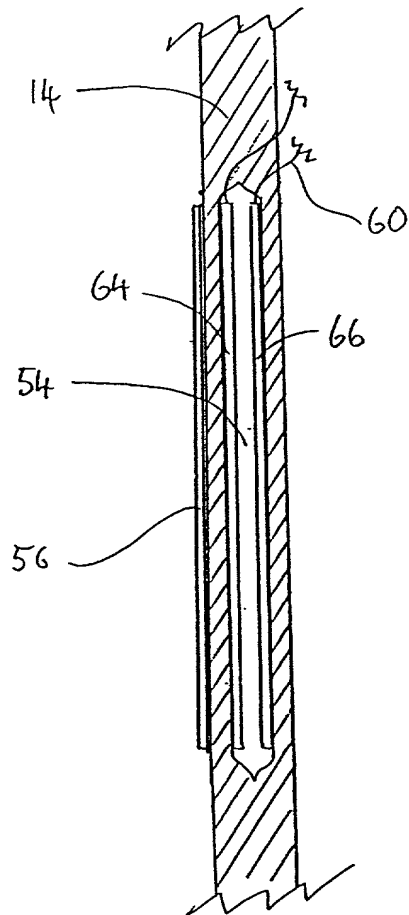


FIG. 7

DECLARATION FOR PATENT APPLICATION

As a below named inventor, I hereby declare that:

My residence, post office address and citizenship are as stated below next to my name.

I believe I am the original, first and sole inventor (if one name is listed below) or an original, first and joint inventor (if more than one name is listed below) of the subject matter which is disclosed and/or claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention entitled: **Apparatus For Supporting Sport Practice Targets** the specification of which

xxx is attached hereto (as amended on _____)

_____ WAS FILED _____ as Application Serial No. _____
and was amended on _____.

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above identified specification, including the claims, as amended by any amendment referred to above.

I acknowledge the duty to disclose to the Patent Office all information known to me to be material to patentability as defined in Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, S1.56.

I hereby claim foreign priority benefits under Title 35, United States Code, s.119, of any foreign applications for patent or inventor's certificate or of any PCT international application designating at least one country other than the United States of America listed below and have also identified below any foreign application for patent or inventor's certificate or any PCT international application designating at least one country other than the United States of America filed by me on the same subject matter having a filing date before that of the application of which priority is claimed:

<u>Prior Foreign Applications</u>			<u>Priority Claimed</u>	
<u>2,285,795</u>	<u>Canada</u>	<u>13 October 1999</u>	<u>xx</u>	
Number	Country	Day/Month/Year filed	Yes	No

I hereby appoint the following attorneys and/or agents to prosecute this application and to transact all business in the United States Patent and Trademark Office connected therewith: Bruce E. O'Connor, Reg. No. 24,849; Lee E. Johnson, Reg. No. 22,946; Gary S. Kindness, Reg. No. 22,178; James W. Anable, Reg. No. 26,827; James R. Uhler, Reg. No. 25,096; Jerald E. Nagae, Reg. No. 29,418; Thomas F. Broderick, Reg. No. 31, 332; Dennis K. Shelton, Reg. No. 26,997; Jeffrey M. Sakoi, Reg. No. 32,059; Ward Brown, Reg. No. 28,400; Robert J. Carlson, Reg. No. 35,472; Marcia S. Kelbon, Reg. No. 34,358; Paul L. Gardner, Reg. No. 22,372; and the firm of

Declaration for application 2

Christensen, O'Connor, Johnson & Kindness^{PLLC} and Anthony R. Lambert, regn. no. 32,813.

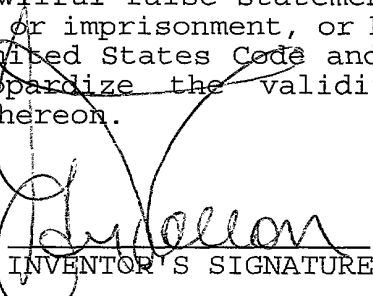
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I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that wilful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such wilful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

Gregory Lorne Pollon
FULL NAME OF SOLE/FIRST INVENTOR


INVENTOR'S SIGNATURE


Aug 26/00
DATE

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